

Introduced by Senators Hall and Mitchell

January 27, 2015

Senate Resolution No. 11—Relative to Black History Month.

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Carter Godwin Woodson, distinguished African
2 American author, editor, publisher, and historian, who is known
3 as the “Father of Black History,” founded Negro History Week in
4 1926, which became Black History Month in 1976, intended to
5 encourage further research and publishing regarding the untold
6 stories of African American heritage; and

7 WHEREAS, The history of African Americans here in the
8 United States, as well as throughout the ages, is indeed unique and
9 vibrant, and it is appropriate to celebrate this history during the
10 month of February 2015, which has been proclaimed as National
11 Black History Month; and

12 WHEREAS, There is even greater cause for a reverent
13 celebration in 2015 as Americans reflect on the significance of the
14 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, and the 50th anniversary
15 of the Selma to Montgomery Marches or “Bloody Sunday”; and

16 WHEREAS, The history of the United States is rich with
17 inspirational stories of great men and noble women whose actions,
18 words, and achievements have united Americans and contributed
19 to the success and prosperity of the United States; and

20 WHEREAS, The slave trade was a tragic episode in African
21 history and began before August 1619 when the first slaves arrived
22 in Jamestown, Virginia. During the course of the slave trade, an
23 estimated 50 million African men, women, and children were lost
24 to their native continent, though only about 15 million arrived
25 safely to a new home. The others lost their lives on African soil

1 or along the Guinea coast, or finally in holds on the ships during
2 the dreaded Middle Passage across the Atlantic Ocean; and

3 WHEREAS, The first American to shed blood in the revolution
4 that freed America from British rule was Crispus Attucks (March
5 5, 1770, Boston Massacre), an African American seaman and slave.
6 African Americans also fought in wars including the Battles of
7 Lexington and Concord in April 1775, the Battle of Rhode Island
8 on August 29, 1775, the battles of Ticonderoga, White Plains,
9 Bennington, Brandywine, Saratoga, Savannah, Yorktown, Bunker
10 Hill, and other revolutionary war battles; the War of 1812,
11 including the Battle of New Orleans; the Civil War, the
12 Spanish-American War; World Wars I and II, Korea, and the
13 Vietnam War; and

14 WHEREAS, In spite of the African slave trade, many Africans
15 and African Americans continued to move forward in society;
16 during the Reconstruction period, two African Americans served
17 in the United States Senate and 14 sat in the House of
18 Representatives; and

19 WHEREAS, From the earliest days of the United States, the
20 course of its history has been greatly influenced by Black heroes
21 and pioneers in many diverse areas, from science, medicine,
22 business, and education to government, industry, and social
23 leadership; and

24 WHEREAS, Africans and African Americans have also been
25 great inventors, inventing and improving things such as the
26 air-conditioning unit, almanac, automatic gearshift, blood plasma
27 bag, clothes dryer, doorknob, doorstop, electric lamp bulb, elevator,
28 fire escape ladder, fountain pen, gas mask, golf tee, horseshoe,
29 lantern, lawnmower, lawn sprinkler, lock, lubricating cup,
30 refrigerating apparatus, spark plug, stethoscope, telephone
31 transmitter, thermostat control, traffic signal, and typewriter; and

32 WHEREAS, A number of these brave and accomplished
33 individuals, such as Booker T. Washington, George Washington
34 Carver, Matthew Hansen, Daniel Hale Williams, Dr. Charles Drew,
35 Jackie Robinson, Jesse Owens, Curt Flood, Medgar Evers, and,
36 of course, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are noted prominently in
37 the history books of students nationwide, thus enabling them to
38 learn about the important and lasting contributions of these
39 individuals; and

1 WHEREAS, Among those Americans who have enriched our
2 society are the members of the African American
3 community—individuals who have been steadfast in their
4 commitment to promoting brotherhood, equality, and justice for
5 all; now, therefore, be it

6 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California*, That the Senate
7 takes great pleasure in recognizing February 2015 as Black History
8 Month, urges all citizens to join in celebrating the accomplishments
9 of African Americans during Black History Month, and encourages
10 the people of California to recognize the many talents,
11 achievements, and contributions that African Americans make to
12 their communities; and be it further

13 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
14 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.